BOROUGH OF ALDEBURGH.

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1918.

To the Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors of the Borough of Aldeburgh.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit the following Report of the health of the Borough for 1918:—

There have been 36 births during the year (20 boys, 16 girls). The birth-rate per 1,000 being 14·5, that for England and Wales was 17·7. There were 7 illegitimate births (5 boys, 2 girls). Last year there were 31 births. For a period of the last ten years the average number was 39·2, and for the previous ten 51·3.

There have been 28 deaths during the year. The death-rate per 1,000 being 12·6, that for England and Wales was 17·6. Last year there were 37 deaths. For a period of the last ten years the average number was 31·7, and for the previous ten 32·6.

There were 3 deaths of infants under 1 year of age. The death-rate per 1,000 births being 83·3, that for England and Wales being 97. The cause of death in two of these cases was premature birth, the children only living a few hours. The other child was accidentally overlain on the second day, drawing attention to the importance of providing a separate cot for the baby.

In considering the birth and death rates it must be remembered that an accurate estimation of the population of the Borough is impossible. According to the Census

In 1901 it was 2,405.
,, 1911 ,, 2,374.
,, 1912 ,, estimated as 2,500.
,, 1913 ,, ,, 2,500.
,, 1914 ,, ,, 2,500.
,, 1915 the Registrar General estimated it at 2,214.
,, 1916 ,, ,, for Births 2,333, for Deaths 2,144.
,, 1917 ,, ,, ,, 2,289, ,, 2,053.
,, 1918 ,, ,, ,, 2,475, ,, 2,209.

I would draw attention to the marked falling off in the number of births during the last ten years, and that our birth-rate compares unfavourably with that for England and Wales. On the other hand, the number of deaths remains fairly stationary and this year compares very favourably with that for England and Wales, which this year reached a very high figure on account of the epidemic of Influenza.

The birth-rate and death-rate for England and Wales for the first time were nearly the same, being 17·7 and 17·6.

On account of the interest taken in Infant Welfare work it is worth noting that the death-rate for infants under 1 year is not so good as usual, and I have compared periods of three years for the last nine years.

1910—1912 the death-rate per 1,000 births was 67·7
1913—1915 ,, ,, ,, ,, 67·1
1916—1918 ,, ,, ,, ,, 39·6

That for England and Wales being 110, 108, and 95 for these periods.

No Midwife has been practising in Aldeburgh for the last three years, but owing to a request from a public meeting of the women of Aldeburgh fresh efforts are being made to obtain one.

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATH.

From Influenza 4 deaths.
From Bright's Disease 3 deaths
From Heart Disease 3 deaths.
From Violence 2 deaths.
From Congenital Debility 2 deaths.
From Diphtheria 1 death.
Nrom Erysipelas 1 death.
From Tuberculosis (Pulmonary) 1 death.
From Bronchitis 1 death.
From Pneumonia 1 death.
From other respiratory diseases 1 death.
From other defined diseases 8 deaths.

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The various ages at which death occurred were as follows :—

Under 1 year	3
Over 1 and under 2	2
Over 2 and under 5	2
Over 5 and under 15	2
Over 15 and under 25	1
Over 25 and under 45	2
Over 45 and under 65	4
Over 65 years	12
Total	28

The average age of the 12 people who died over the age of 65 was 75.

During the last 9 years there have been 293 deaths, of whom 132 were over 65 years of age, the average age of these being 75.

The following infectious diseases were notified during the year :—

Measles and German Measles	32	(21)
Scarlet Fever	*Nil*	(1)
Diphtheria	3	(2)
Typhoid Fever	1	(*Nil*)
Cerebro Spinal Fever	*Nil*	(1)
Erysipelas	2	(*Nil*)
Tuberculosis (Pulmonary)	2	(*Nil*)
Puerperal Fever	1	(*Nil*)
Influenza (cases)	58	(*Nil*)
Influenza (deaths)	3	(*Nil*)

The figures in brackets represent Military cases.

The figures for Influenza refer to the Winter or second epidemic, and it will be noticed that there were no cases occurring amongst the Military, due, in my opinion, to the care with which the soldiers douched their noses and throats morning and evening with saline solution (a teaspoonful of salt to a pint of water) and potassium permanganate (just enough to make it pink), whilst during the first epidemic, in June, there were as many as a hundred cases down in one day, when these precautionary measures were not carried out.

The Infant Schools were closed from July 2nd to July 15th, and again December 6th to the end of the Christmas holidays, on both occasions on account of Influenza.

I would draw your attention to the fact that there is no suitable provision made for making *post-mortem* examinations, and would urge that this receives your immediate attention.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

C. D. SOMERS,

Medical Officer of Health.